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Letter dated 3 November 1995 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the letter of His Excellency Dr. Radoje Kontić, Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, addressed to you (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 81, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIC
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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ANNEX

Letter dated 1 November 1995 from the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia addressed to the Secretary-General

The United Nations Security Council, in its resolution 981 (1995) of 31 March 1995, established the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia, known as UNCRO, and decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations peace-keeping forces for an additional period until 30 November 1995, recognizing that conditions for the termination of the peace-keeping operation had not been created, i.e., that the reasons whereupon the UNCRO mandate had been established still prevailed.

However, in the period following the adoption of the said resolution, Croatia committed the aggression on Western Slavonia, and then on the sectors under the protection of the United Nations, known as Sectors South and North, whereby, contrary to all relevant Security Council resolutions, it directly jeopardized the activities of the peace-keeping forces in the field and brought into question further implementation of the United Nations mandate of this operation. The international community and the Security Council, satisfied only with lukewarm and above all verbal reactions, undertaking no concrete measures against Croatia, de facto accepted the newly created situation on the ground, i.e., the occupation of the areas under the United Nations protection and the expulsion of almost the entire Serbian population (about 250,000 people) from the territories in which they had lived for centuries.

The Croatian aggression resulted in major and forcible demographic displacement in the areas under the protection of the United Nations forces, i.e., in mass resettlement and exodus of the Serbian population, violation of human rights, burning and destruction of their property including the Orthodox places of worship and Serbian cultural and historical monuments. Faced with these problems, the United Nations Security Council, in its resolution 1009 (1995) of 10 August 1995, demanded that Croatia respect fully the rights of the local Serbian population, allow access to this population by international humanitarian organizations and create conditions conducive to the return of those persons who had left their homes. Unfortunately, Croatia continues to pursue its aggressive policy of force against the remaining Serbian population disregarding the requests of the United Nations Security Council and the warnings of leading international factors.

Furthermore, irrespective of the ongoing negotiations on the future of the Srem and Baranja area, Croatia continues its threats with war option, i.e., that it will take measures for the forcible integration of this area unless the negotiations are not concluded by the date of the expiration of the UNCRO mandate. Such behaviour of Croatia is no novelty. In the past, before any extension of mandate of the peace-keeping forces, Croatia regularly made various requests and conditioned its consent for the extension of the operation by their fulfilment. It is clear that continuous Croatian threats, sabre rattling and persistent military provocations, as well as the deployment of great number of Croatian troops in the contiguous territories of Srem and Baranja, are not a way

to overcome major outstanding problems in a satisfactory manner, i.e., by peaceful means and through political negotiations.

In view of the above and the events that have taken place since the adoption of Security Council resolution 981 (1995), the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia considers that it is imperative that the mandate of the UNCRO mission be extended. Thereby, the conditions would be created for the full implementation of the mission taken by the United Nations, concerning above all the protection of the Serbian civilian population in the areas under the UNCRO mandate. The presence of the United Nations forces would ensure that the process of ethnic cleansing and forcible expulsion of the remaining Serbs from the territories where they live be halted, and thereby the conditions would be created for the return of the refugees, who have left the territories of the Republic of Serbian Krajina, to their homes.

If the UNCRO mandate is not extended this could also have a direct and adverse effect on the peace negotiations, with a threat of new conflicts and the escalation of war operations to other territories of the former Yugoslavia and beyond.

Convinced that the problems created in the territory of the former Yugoslavia could be solved only by peaceful means and through negotiations on the basis of equality and respect for the interests of all sides, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia considers that it is imperative to extend the mandate of UNCRO until a comprehensive political solution is reached, i.e., until all conditions for the implementation of the agreements concluded between the interested parties are being created. I wish to assure Your Excellency that the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will, as in the past, continue to render its full and constructive contribution to this end.

(Signed) Radoje KONTIĆ